

SECTION 13. PERFORMANCE AWARDS

(As amended October 21, 2008, July 23, 2013, and June 30, 2015.)

13-1. Policy on employee performance awards.

- (a) The CAO may grant an award to a merit system employee for noteworthy or extraordinary performance under the criteria outlined in this section.
- (b) The OHR Director must administer monetary and non-monetary employee awards programs.
- (c) A department director must administer approved awards programs for a department under these Regulations.
- (d) An MLS employee is not eligible for a monetary award under this section except with approval of the CAO or as outlined in Section 13-2(d).

13-2. Monetary awards.

- (a) ***Department Employee of the Year Award.***
 - (1) ***Award type.*** The Department Employee of the Year Award is a lump sum cash award.
 - (2) ***Eligibility.*** Merit system employees are eligible.
 - (3) ***Award criteria.*** Criteria include:
 - (A) exceptional or noteworthy performance for an extended period of time;
 - (B) completion of a special project requiring unusual skill or effort; or
 - (C) similar or comparable achievement.
 - (4) ***Limitations.*** A department director must not award more than \$500 per employee in a fiscal year.
 - (5) ***Nomination procedure.*** A division chief must make a written recommendation to the department director documenting the reason for the award.

(b) ***Department Recognition Award.***

- (1) ***Award type.*** The Department Recognition Award is a:
 - (A) lump sum cash award; or
 - (B) non-cash award such as a restaurant gift certificate or theater tickets.
- (2) ***Eligibility.*** Merit system employees are eligible.
- (3) ***Award criteria.*** Criteria include:
 - (A) noteworthy performance;
 - (B) special effort that results in a significant product, action or efficiency improvement; or
 - (C) any employee action, activity, or product that is valued and appreciated by the department.
- (4) ***Limitations.***
 - (A) A department director must not grant more than \$200 to an employee in a fiscal year.
 - (B) A department director must not grant non-cash awards with a cost or value of more than \$100 to an employee in a fiscal year.
- (5) ***Nomination procedure.*** A division chief must provide a written recommendation to the department director documenting the reason for the award.

(c) ***Annual Leave Award.***

- (1) ***Award type.*** The Annual Leave Award is an amount of annual leave.
- (2) ***Eligibility.*** Merit system employees are eligible.
- (3) ***Award criteria.*** Criteria include:
 - (A) sustained or unusual effort on a special project;
 - (B) outstanding or noteworthy performance on a sustained basis or for a special project.

- (C) any actions, activities, or products of importance and value to the department.
 - (4) **Limitations.** A department director may grant up to a maximum of 40 hours of leave per employee in a fiscal year.
 - (5) **Nomination procedure.** A division chief must provide a written recommendation to the department director documenting the reason for the award.
- (d) ***Paid Time Off or Annual Leave Award for MLS Employees.***
- (1) **Award type.** The Paid Time Off Award is an amount of paid time off for MLS employees who are members of the Retirement Savings Plan or Guaranteed Retirement Income Plan. The Annual Leave Award is an amount of annual leave for MLS employees who are members of a defined benefit pension plan and who earn annual leave and sick leave instead of Paid Time Off.
 - (2) **Eligibility.** MLS employees are eligible.
 - (3) **Award criteria.** A Paid Time Off or Annual Leave Award for an MLS employee is neither ordinary nor usual but may be appropriate to recognize:
 - (A) exceptional performance for an extended period of time;
 - (B) completion of a major special project requiring unusual skill and effort and working a substantial number of uncompensated hours;
or
 - (C) working a substantial number of uncompensated hours during an emergency (i.e. general emergency, local emergency, and liberal leave periods).
 - (4) **Limitations.** A department director may grant up to a maximum of 40 hours of paid time off or annual leave per employee in a fiscal year.
 - (5) **Nomination and approval procedure.** A department director must make a written recommendation to the CAO documenting the reason for the award. The CAO must determine whether to approve a Paid Time Off Award or an Annual Leave Award to an MLS employee.

13-3. Procedures for monetary awards.

- (a) A department director must:

- (1) recommend to the CAO a departmental employee who deserves to receive an Outstanding Performance Increment, and if granted by the CAO, must prepare the documentation for processing;
 - (2) recommend to the CAO an MLS employee who deserves to receive a Paid Time Off Award or an Annual Leave Award and document the reason for the award;
 - (3) for all other monetary awards:
 - (A) review and evaluate all awards recommended for the department, ensuring that the award type and amount are commensurate with the performance or product being recognized;
 - (B) determine which awards to approve; and
 - (C) provide all required award information to OHR.
- (b) The OHR Director must:
- (1) record an employee's award information in the employee's official file;
 - (2) send an employee's award information to the Finance Department's Payroll Section for processing;
 - (3) collect from departments information about all awards granted by the department in a fiscal year; and
 - (4) report to the CAO at the end of a fiscal year a department's total:
 - (A) cash awards;
 - (B) non-cash awards with an individual value of more than \$50; and
 - (C) hours of annual leave or paid time off granted as awards.
- (c) The CAO must determine whether to approve an Outstanding Performance Increment to an employee or to approve a Paid Time Off Award or an Annual Leave Award to an MLS employee.

13-4. Honorary awards. Honorary awards are non-monetary awards.

- (a) ***Montgomery's Best Honor Awards.***
- (1) ***Award type.*** Plaques or other tokens of appreciation are given annually for the following awards:
 - (A) Award for Exceptional Service;

- (B) Employee of the Year Award;
 - (C) Employee Representative of the Year Award;
 - (D) Customer Service Award;
 - (E) County Partnership Award;
 - (F) County Diversity Award; and
 - (G) Executive's Safety Award.
- (2) **Eligibility.** Depending on the award, merit system employees, volunteers, residents, private organizations, and employee representatives are eligible.
 - (3) **Award criteria.** The general criterion for these awards is exceptional effort to support the County's programs and guiding principles.
 - (4) **Limitations.** Some awards are limited in number.
 - (5) **Nomination procedure.** All County employees and volunteers may submit written nominations for awards and the reason for the nomination. Peer groups will evaluate the nominations and make the selections.
- (b) **Length of Service Awards.** The CAO may give length of service awards to recognize longevity in County employment.
 - (c) **Other honorary awards.** The CAO may establish other non-monetary honorary awards.

13-5. Gifts or awards from a civic group or similar organization.

- (a) An employee may accept an honorary award from a civic group or similar organization.
- (b) Under Section 19A-16 of the County Code (Appendix C), an employee may not accept a monetary award.
- (c) An employee should direct a question about whether it is permissible to accept a gift from civic groups or similar organizations to the Ethics Commission.

Editor's note – The subjects covered in this section of the Personnel Regulations are addressed for bargaining unit employees in the current collective bargaining agreements as indicated below:

Bargaining unit	Articles of current agreements with references to performance awards
Firefighter/Rescuer	5, Management Rights 33, DFRS Awards Committee
OPT/SLT	2, Management Rights
Police	5, Tech Pay 29, Physical Fitness Awards 49, Awards 50, Reduction-in-Force and Furlough 53, Performance Evaluation 55, Job Sharing Program